

MASTER'S MATES.

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

A communication from the Secretary of the Navy, exhibiting the names of persons appointed master's mates, the date of appointment, and their station; and giving information that the sailing of the ship Raritan has been postponed until further orders.

FEBRUARY 9, 1844.

Read, and referred to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

To the House of Representatives:

In compliance with the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 22d January, I herewith transmit a letter from the Secretary of the Navy, containing all the information in the possession of that department on the subject to which the resolution refers.

JOHN TYLER.

WASHINGTON, *February 6, 1844.*

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *February 5, 1844.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a resolution of the House of Representatives, dated 22d ultimo, calling upon the President of the United States to inform the House what persons have been appointed master's mates since the passage of the law limiting the number of midshipmen, and permitted or required to do duty as midshipmen, and requesting or suggesting that the sailing of the frigate Raritan be postponed.

In answer, I have to state that four master's mates have been appointed, as follows:

Names.	Date of appointment.	Station.
John W. W. Dyes,	18th March, 1843.	Just returned from Brazil.
James H. Polly,	3d May, 1843.	Ship Boston.
Charles B. Oliver,	3d May, 1843.	Frigate Brandywine.
Edmund F. Olmstead,	3d May, 1843.	Receiving-ship Norfolk.

Blair & Rives, printers.

No appointment of midshipman has been made since the passage of the law limiting their number; and none of master's mates, except those above named.

A definite number of midshipmen and master's mates is allowed to ships, according to their respective rates, without specifying how many of each. Since the present class of midshipmen has been at the naval school, some commanders of ships have been allowed to rate as master's mates persons who have entered as landsmen or boys. The practice of rating master's mates, gunner's mates, and other petty officers, is believed to have prevailed from the first existence of the navy. Rating is not an appointment, and gives the party no claim to office or promotion, nor to pay above their rating. The only notice in the law upon the subject is, that a rated man, transferred to another ship, shall not be disrated, though he may be disrated on board his own.

The number and names of the persons rated have not been reported to the department.

In conformity to the suggestion contained in the aforesaid resolution, that the sailing of the frigate *Raritan*, now ready for sea, be postponed, instructions have been sent to her commander to remain in port until further orders.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir, your most obedient servant,
DAVID HENSHAW.

The PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

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